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# KING AND ARTIST

A ROMANTIC PLAY IN FIVE ACTS

*No 2.*

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# KING AND ARTIST

A Romantic Play in Five Acts

BY

LILIAN MOUBREY

AND

WALTER HERRIES POLLOCK

LONDON

WILLIAM HEINEMANN

1897

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ACT I. ITALY (ROME). TIME 1540

*CHARACTERS*

BENVENUTO CELLINI.

ANTONIO DI GADDI, } his adopted children, artists.  
BIANCA DI GADDI, }

GIORGIO, an artist.

PIETRO, Cellini's foreman.

RODOLFO, }  
MATTEO, } Cellini's workmen.  
CARLO, }  
RICCARDO, }  
FRANCESCO, }

ROBERTO.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE PAPAL GUARD.

THE GOVERNOR OF THE PRISON OF SAN ANGELO.

GUARDS, etc.

ACTS II—V. FRANCE (FONTAINEBLEAU AND PARIS)

TIME 1540

*CHARACTERS*

BENVENUTO CELLINI.

FRANCIS THE FIRST, King of France.

THE DUKE OF SIDONIA, Ambassador from Spain to the Court of  
France.

THE COUNT DE PRÉVILLE, Lord Provost of Paris.

THE COUNT D'ORBEC, his friend.

## KING AND ARTIST

PIETRO, Cellini's foreman.

ALEXANDRE, nephew to Giorgio, engaged in Cellini's foundry.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE KING'S GUARD.

MONTLUC, }  
FAUVILLE, } Courtiers.

ANTONIO DI GADDI, Cellini's adopted son.

THE DUCHESS OF BEAUVAIS.

THE COUNTESS DIANE OF POITIERS.

MADemoiselle DE PRÉVILLE, daughter of the Count de Préville.

BIANCA DI GADDI, Cellini's adopted daughter.

COURTIERS, GUARDS, SERVANTS, AND WORKING-MEN.

# KING AND ARTIST

## ACT I

### SCENE I

BENVENUTO CELLINI'S *studio in Rome. Richly furnished with works of art, vertu, etc. Doors (as wanted), R. and L. Steps up stage R. At back, C., entrance covered by portière to the workshop and foundry. As the music in the orchestra grows fainter, but before it has altogether ceased, voices are heard singing a snatch of chorus, and, as the curtain has fully risen,*

*Enter Workmen (through portière) headed by PIETRO, who as foreman takes the lead throughout.*

PIETRO (*looking round as they group themselves*).

All here, comrades?

RODOLFO. I think we are all here.

PIETRO (*looking round again, as if calling the roll to himself*). All here. Good. We wait but for the greatest—the Master.

RODOLFO. And what a Master!

MATTEO (*with a slightly jealous air*). You might say so indeed, if you knew as much of him as I do!

CARLO. What do you know more than we do?

MATTEO (*he is grizzled and reserved*). I know this. He saved Rome from being taken by siege!

PIETRO. I have heard of this, Matteo; and, for my part, I know from what I hear abroad that Cellini is a master poet too!

RICCARDO. And I, who was apprentice to a surgeon, I know his skill in healing.

MATTEO. As I his skill in the sword-play that brought wounds for you to heal.

FRANCESCO. And for me, I have a cousin in the Pope's choir. I know from him that Cellini is a master in music as in sculpture, as in——

PIETRO. As in everything. Hark! the clock strikes.

MARCO. Ay! The first stroke of seven. Mark me—never since I have worked under Cellini have I known him miss tryst with king or peasant!

CARLO. Is his punctuality, then, as great as his mastership?

MARCO. Indeed it is. Never have I known Cellini to be a moment late save once.

PIETRO. How was that?

MARCO. I know little of it, save who it was that kept him late.

PIETRO (*interpreting general curiosity*). And who was that?

MARCO. One we none of us love overmuch, Messer Giorgio.

CARLO. Messer Giorgio! Ah! Messer Giorgio—a Corsican!

PIETRO. A Corsican? Well?

MARCO. No—not well—ill! [*During this dialogue the clock strikes, according to the stage-manager's direction of the timing. All fall into well-drilled group as, on the very last stroke of the clock, CELLINI appears at top of steps, R. (up stage). Silence while CELLINI'S entrance takes effect. His appearance combines command and attraction. The steel hand beneath the velvet glove.*]

CELLINI (*descends steps*). Good-morrow, comrades all! Pietro, all goes well?

PIETRO. All goes well, Master.

CELLINI. Then, Pietro, take your comrades and mine to the foundry. The work is not heavy to-day. The group of nymphs to be cast for the Cardinal. (*Half-aside.*) Ah! the Cardinal!

PIETRO (*gravely*). The work is not heavy to-day. Comrades—to the foundry. (*Exeunt all but CELLINI.*)

CELLINI (*goes to a shelf and takes up a goblet or patera musingly*). Good workmen! None better! Good friends! None better! And my renown as great as even I could hope it. Yet, things do not move so well with me as they did in the time, the gracious time, when Pope Clement was alive—alive to foster that spirit of Art that he so loved. Cardinal Farnese is all-powerful now. He has no love of Art—he has, I know it well, no love for me. The Artist's life is by nature as lonely as that of the Great Artist—God! (*Crosses himself.*) It is from Him that I have the power of making things that will live, as I live in His Presence. Yet—the loneliness. He, the Artist of the Universe, has helped me there. My adopted children, the son and daughter of the great Gaddis, have cheered me with their love and their sincerity in my darkest hours. Without them I, Benvenuto Cellini, might feel lost amid the intrigues that trouble the poet's soul! These things should not be. A Cardinal's hat should not fret me. (*He handles goblet again.*) He who designed and made this should not be the creature of a chance supremacy. Nor shall it be so. For myself I sometimes care little what may hap. For Bianca, for Antonio, the children of a great

race, the children whom it fell to me to succour in their hour of misfortune—for them I care much—maybe too much! (CELLINI *sits in chair, R., in an attitude of reflection.*)

*Enter L., BIANCA and ANTONIO.*

(CELLINI *is still lost in musing when BIANCA speaks to him, touching his shoulder.*)

BIANCA. Dear guardian! Am I wrong to disturb you?

CELLINI (*answering at once to the touch and the voice*). Bianca! Never, never wrong. You can never disturb me. Your presence is a sun-ray among the clouds.

ANTONIO. What clouds, dear Master? Surely the group of nymphs for the Cardinal is in excellent train?

CELLINI. Yes, yes. That is nothing. A mere trifle. But—the Cardinal himself——

BIANCA. Then it is as I feared—you dread the Cardinal's influence and partiality.

CELLINI. You are right, child, I do. As long as Clement the Pope ruled Rome, so long I knew that I had to deal with one who knew my worth!

ANTONIO. Ay, but even now, Master, remember the enthusiasm with which your offer to design

the great chalice was received by the present Pope's Secretary! Remember how the Secretary pressed a purse of gold on you as a handsel!

CELLINI. It is well to remember that. But there are other things to remember. I have enemies.

BIANCA. There is no greatness that does not breed enemies.

ANTONIO. What enemies can you have—you the acknowledged Master?

CELLINI. It is that very acknowledgment that sows envy. You know our Latin authors. You can find a case in point.

BIANCA. Master, guardian, I think I know where your thoughts tend!

CELLINI. Child of my heart—your thoughts often leap to mine.

ANTONIO. And I think, not only that Bianca has read your thoughts, but that I can prove her perception to be just.

CELLINI (*starting, and recovering a grave demeanour*). How is this? Explain fully, my boy, speak without fear or favour.

ANTONIO. Your word, Master, is a command. When I had left your completed design for the chalice with the Secretary to his Holiness the Pope, when I was passing through the ante-chamber, I met one coming in.

BIANCA. Giorgio!

CELLINI. Again our thoughts leap together. But Giorgio himself would have hesitated at that.

ANTONIO. You are right, Master. It was an emissary from Giorgio bearing Giorgio's design. I spoke civilly to him. He gave me a gruff answer.

CELLINI. These Corsicans, or half-Corsicans, are troublesome, obstinate folk; but Giorgio is not Cellini.

BIANCA (*with marked contempt*). Giorgio! That he should be named in the same breath with Cellini! Giorgio! Would such a creature have done for us what Cellini has done for you and for me, Antonio?

CELLINI. Do not speak of that! What have I done?

BIANCA. Done? Saved us from the utmost misery when my mother died! Done? Made us the possessors of the proudest title that Art can boast—your pupils! Done? You plucked us from destitution, you have put us almost side by side with yourself, and you ask what you have done!

ANTONIO. Indeed, Cellini, I was a mere waif when your protection reached us. You have made me your unworthy learner in art, in sword-play, in all the many sciences that you

have at command! And why should you have done all this for us?

CELLINI. Children, children, you force me to repeat a tale more than twice told. I loved your mother with such a love as comes only once in a lifetime to the artist's heart!

BIANCA. And I remember well my mother's dying words: 'Had I known Benvenuto earlier—but trust him, nevertheless, all in all.' I have not forgotten those words—I never shall forget them.

CELLINI. Be sure of this—love never dies. But to affairs of the moment—affairs as to which, in case of accident or treachery, a thing always too near me, I wish you both to be closely informed.

ANTONIO. New trouble, Master?

CELLINI. New and old. As old as Judas Iscariot, and as new. I heard it privately from Dunois, the French Ambassador. There is, to a certainty, a powerful cabal raised against me here. Dunois, when he made this plain to me, added that Francis the First, the French King, would welcome me to his Court as artist in more branches of art than one. This is a matter worth consideration. And I must answer Dunois speedily.

BIANCA. A cabal? Then I know who has created this conspiracy against you!

ANTONIO. And I too. There can be no doubt.  
It can be none other than——

*(Knock at door. ANTONIO opens to admit*

*SERVANT, who says:)*

SERVANT. Signor Giorgio, to wait on Signor Cellini.

CELLINI *(exchanging glances with BIANCA and ANTONIO)*. Ask Signor Giorgio to enter.

*Enter GIORGIO.*

GIORGIO *(with a cringing air, veiling a sense of triumph)*. Signor Cellini, I trust I do not incommode you by this visit.

BIANCA *(aside to ANTONIO)*. How pat it falls!

ANTONIO *(aside to BIANCA)*. It was to be expected.

CELLINI. Sir, the visit of a brother artist is always welcome. *(Motions him to chair.)*

GIORGIO *(evading this courtesy, and still standing)*.

Signor Cellini, I come not as a brother artist, but as a humble messenger from the Vatican.

CELLINI. From his Holiness the Pope?

GIORGIO. Rather from him nearest to his Holiness —from the Pope's Secretary.

CELLINI. Indeed? And what message do you bring?

GIORGIO *(looking at BIANCA and ANTONIO)*. It is a private message.

CELLINI. Speak on. My adopted children are in my fullest confidence.

GIORGIO. Then, Signor, I fear my news may be unpleasing; but (*noting CELLINI'S frown*) you will remember that I am but a messenger.

CELLINI (*breaking for a moment into his naturally impetuous temper*). Then, in God's name, give your message and have done with it!

GIORGIO (*still cringing and venomous*). It would appear, Signor Cellini, that you sent to his Holiness a design for the great chalice.

CELLINI (*with grave dignity*). I did.

GIORGIO. It was thought, Signor, that your design was accepted beforehand?

CELLINI. I had excellent reason to think so.

GIORGIO. No doubt, no doubt. But, for so great a prize, there are sure to be many competitors.

BIANCA (*to ANTONIO*). You see?

ANTONIO (*to BIANCA*). Yes; I see.

CELLINI. Many competitors? Naturally. And then?

GIORGIO. And then—to put it plainly—the design sent in by another competitor was preferred to yours, no doubt unjustly, Signor (*seeing that CELLINI appears unmoved and peaceable*), and I am charged to bring you back your own design!

CELLINI (*takes the outstretched design mechanically. Holds it for a moment—then, bursting*

*into anger, tears it with such fury that GIORGIO cowers back from him).* That, then, for my design! Whose is the design preferred to mine?

GIORGIO (*timorously*). Why, it is——

BIANCA. It is——

CELLINI. Quiet, child! (*To GIORGIO.*) I know, it is yours. (*GIORGIO bows assent.*) (*With studied courtesy and suppressed bitterness.*) There should be no jealousy between artists. Signor Giorgio, I congratulate you, and, moreover, I beg to charge you with this purse for the Pope's Secretary. You will do me the favour of taking it back to him. (*GIORGIO takes it solemnly.*) (*CELLINI goes up stage and sits on chair in despondent attitude.*)

GIORGIO (*who has been fearing an outbreak from CELLINI, turning to BIANCA and ANTONIO*). You—you see, if I could be sorry for winning a prize it would be because——

BIANCA (*advancing in front of ANTONIO, who has laid his hand on his dagger*). Signor Giorgio! You are *not* sorry. You are glad, with all the gladness that a base nature can feel! Who was it that found you in distress, and helped you? Cellini! Who was it that taught you all you know of his own wondrous art? Cellini! Who was it that made interest for you with the Pope? Cellini! Who is the man whom you

repay by the vilest ingratitude? Cellini! You traitor, you villain, these deeds will recoil on your own head! Great men never strike in the dark—that is work for curs. Yet I know that your punishment will come, and it will come from—Cellini! (GIORGIO *cowers before the impetus of BIANCA'S speech.*)

CELLINI (*rousing himself from meditation*). Bianca, enough. No reproach can touch such a man. (*To GIORGIO.*) Sir, your design is accepted by the Pope. Good. You have brought me the news of this. Good. And now, sir, if I can be of no further service to you—(*Pointing to door.*) (*Exit GIORGIO abashed and angry. When the door is closed:*)

CELLINI. Good! And now, children, I must try to unravel the threads of this intrigue. I will seek the Captain of the Pope's Guard. He may tell me what is afoot, he may not. It is worth the trial. (*As he goes to door:*)

BIANCA. My guardian, you must not go unarmed. (BIANCA *gives him sword and dagger. Business of thanks and farewell.*)

CELLINI (*at door*). Antonio, I leave all to you while I am away. I shall return soon. (*Exit.*)

BIANCA (*half aside, half to ANTONIO*). And may God defend the right!

## SCENE II

*A retired place in the suburbs of Rome.*

*Enter R., GIORGIO.*

GIORGIO. He should come this way. My spies are to be trusted—so far as spies can be. I have won the game so far. But who knows the caprices of a Cardinal, and a Cardinal so full of caprices? No, it is better to clear Cellini at once from my path, as I hope now to do. (*Calling to followers off stage.*) Roberto! Are you ready with your men?

ROBERTO (*entering R., with two others*). Signor, we are ready.

GIORGIO. Wait here a while, then. He whom I wish to meet must pass this way. I will give you the signal for attack.

ROBERTO. What shall the signal be?

GIORGIO. Let the signal be his name—Cellini. And now hide, you and your men. He may come at any moment. (*ROBERTO and his two followers exeunt R.*)

GIORGIO. Yes, it is my turn now, and much depends on it. Once he is removed, the game is mine—mine! With the five hundred gold crowns, and who knows what future gain?

Footsteps, are they his? (*He goes to R. of stage, watching.*)

*Enter CELLINI L.*

CELLINI. So far upon my way. I know not what strange presage of misfortune clouds my spirit. Presages come to mortals oft-times by Will Divine. They are not to be neglected. And Bianca's reminder that I was going abroad unarmed! Be watchful, Cellini, watchful and prayerful! Ah! (*Discerning GIORGIO's figure.*) A man, in hiding! Is this a trap, then? (*He loosens his dagger and sword.*) Who is there?

GIORGIO. I!

CELLINI. What do you want with me? Have you not mistaken me for some other person?

GIORGIO. I have not.

CELLINI (*recognising him*). Giorgio! What can you mean by waylaying me thus?

GIORGIO. I mean that there is no room for you and for me in Rome, and I have waited to tell you this!

CELLINI. Is it so? You would shine, then, at my expense not only as an artist but as a road-pad!

GIORGIO. A road-pad! No! I am not a robber!

CELLINI. No, no common robber, but a deeper villain! I see all! You would be rid of me and keep the money I was fool enough to trust to you! Scoundrel, return me the purse! I

will take it myself to the Pope, and let his Holiness know into what hands it had fallen. No, this is no common robbery, but you are a common assassin! (*GIORGIO makes a dagger thrust at CELLINI.*)

CELLINI (*parrying thrust with his gloved hand*). Well, I am for you. (*Falls on guard with sword and dagger.*)

GIORGIO. Ay, but not for me alone, Signor—Cellini! (*At the name the other three appear, and threaten CELLINI.*) Fall on! fall on! What do you fear? We are four to one!

CELLINI (*calmly*). You are mistaken, Signor Giorgio. Benvenuto Cellini counts for three. My match is with you, Signor Giorgio! (*CELLINI and GIORGIO engage, and after a few passes GIORGIO, who has given CELLINI a slight wound, falls dead. The other three have merely hovered round the two combatants, and now timidly advance upon CELLINI.*)

CELLINI. Your master is dead. One step further and you shall join him wherever his soul may have found a place! He has spoilt my dagger-hand for the moment, but the sword alone shall quit me of your vile presence! (*He faces them flaming with wrath. They cower back after one or two half-hearted attempts at fight, and exeunt.*)

CELLINI (*alone*). I was right. Presages are sent from Heaven! And Heaven has protected Her unworthy servant!

END OF SCENE II

SCENE III

CELLINI'S *studio as before*. BIANCA and ANTONIO *discovered*. BIANCA *is sitting on couch or chair reflectively*.

ANTONIO *is standing by one of the buffets handling plate and articles of vertu, as the curtain rises*.

BIANCA. What is it, Antonio? Are you watching the clock?

ANTONIO. Well—the Master is late——

BIANCA. And you are anxious. Let us confess it. We are both anxious!

ANTONIO. Anxious? Anxious? You go too far! Why should any one be anxious because Cellini is late?

BIANCA. Why? Because even Cellini might be taken in ambuscade! Even Cellini might be overpowered by numbers!

ANTONIO. Dearest! You talk like a child, like the child that you are! Not all the bandits that infest Rome could make me fear for our Master's safety! (*In this dialogue the secret*

*fear on the part of BIANCA and ANTONIO may be emphasised, and specially as regards BIANCA.)*

BIANCA. True, Antonio, true. Cellini is a host in himself, and yet!

ANTONIO. And yet! Remember, above all, what Cellini has done! Remember his renown! Remember most what he has done for us!

BIANCA. It is that very remembrance that sets my heart beating now. Antonio (*she speaks with loving reminiscence but still with a hint of tremor*), when we were orphans together, when we were cast adrift, mere children as we were, at the mercy of a cruel world, it was Cellini who saved us from a fate of terror.

ANTONIO. It was Cellini. You sent him our dear mother's letter and it brought instant help from him. Since then we have lived his adopted children.

BIANCA (*with a touch of dreaminess*). It is even so. There is infinite help and tenderness in that great heart that can be so strong on a fit occasion. He has been all to us, and never can we show him thankfulness complete! O! if we lost him! (*She is slightly overcome for a moment.*)

ANTONIO. Content you, dear sister (*soothing her distress*). Men of Cellini's stamp are not easily lost to the world. (*On the last word enter*

CELLINI *bearing signs of fatigue and keeping his left hand in his doublet, but, as always, alert and brave.*)

CELLINI. You are right, my boy. I have come unscathed from worse encounters than one that I have just had. Why (*to BIANCA, who has rushed to him with an access of joy*), why, child, you are overcome—distressed—and for so small a thing! All is well—all is well.

BIANCA. So small a thing as your safe return! You mean so great! (*Noticing that, in the embrace, his wounded hand has been jarred.*) And what is this? You are hurt!

CELLINI. Hurt? No, a mere scratch from a treacherous claw!

ANTONIO. Ah! I can guess whence the hurt came.

CELLINI. Whose hand would give it except the hand that has so often fawned on mine, Giorgio's!

BIANCA. He, that wretch, dared to attack you?

CELLINI. Not single-handed. No, trust him for that, if for naught else. Even so the encounter did not last long, and Giorgio has no more debts of revenge or envy to pay here——

BIANCA (*shudderingly*). You killed him?

CELLINI. It was his life or mine. What is unfortunate is that his death may do me more injury than his life could ever have done.

ANTONIO. How should that be?

CELLINI. My boy, he is protected by the Pope, and by his niece at the French Court, the Duchess de Beauvais, and you may be sure that the news was carried straight by his followers to those about the Pope who wish me no good.

ANTONIO. You fear, then——

CELLINI. No, I do not fear, but I know that I may be arrested by the Pope's order at any moment. In that case seek out the French Ambassador at once. Tell him what has befallen me, and tell him further that I accept his Royal Master's gracious invitation to Paris. Stay — this must be written and signed. (*BIANCA brings writing materials. CELLINI writes and gives the letter to her, saying*) You will see that this reaches the Ambassador without fail. Monsieur Dunois is my old and good friend. He will do all he can, but our enemies are powerful. (*Knocking heard at door.*) What did I tell you?

BIANCA. So soon !

CELLINI. Ay, mischief goes ever hot-foot. (*More knocking and a voice, 'Open in the name of his Holiness the Pope.'*) (*Motioning to BIANCA and ANTONIO to remain quiet, opens the door to a Captain of Guards, who enters with a detachment of men.*)

CELLINI. You seek me, Captain? We have met, I think, on more pleasant occasions.

CAPTAIN. Signor Cellini, I have indeed a thankless office to discharge. In pursuance of my warrant I arrest you for the murder of Signor Giorgio.

BIANCA (*passionately*). Murder! It was no murder! An unprovoked attack met by ready resistance! It is monstrous!

CAPTAIN. That, Signora, does not regard my duty. Signor Cellini!

CELLINI. At your service, sir. Whither do you take me?

CAPTAIN. To the castle of San Angelo.

ANTONIO (*who has till this moment repressed a rising wrath, laying hand on sword-hilt*). You shall not take him! He has in self-defence rid the world of a scoundrel. Your accusation and your warrant are an infamy!

CELLINI (*again motioning ANTONIO back*). Captain, you will know how to forgive a youthful outburst, inspired by affection. Grant me one word of farewell to my adopted children and I follow you. I have your pardon for this impetuous boy? (*Laying his hand affectionately on ANTONIO'S shoulder.*)

CAPTAIN. By my patron Saint, I would have done the same! But, Signor, time presses.

CELLINI. You are right, Captain. But two

words. (*To BIANCA loud.*) Farewell, child. I leave all things in the care of your brother and yourself. (*Low.*) Ten days from now, the first dark and rainy night, at the west side of the castle of (*aloud again*) San Angelo!

BIANCA (*stooping to kiss his hand slips poniard into it*). It was my mother's. It is of the truest temper.

CELLINI (*concealing poniard*). Well done! (*Aloud again.*) Farewell then, child, and farewell to you, Antonio. Bianca will tell you all my directions for the work I leave to you. Captain, I follow you. (*CELLINI, CAPTAIN, and GUARDS move to door.*) (*At door.*) Forget none of my directions! (*Exeunt CELLINI, CAPTAIN, and GUARDS.*)

ANTONIO. And he has gone to prison!

BIANCA. Is the prison yet made that can hold Cellini?

#### END OF SCENE III

#### SCENE IV

*The castle of San Angelo. CELLINI'S prison-room.*

*CELLINI is discovered working at door back C.*

CELLINI. So much done! And my sculpturing to have helped me so much at this pass! (*Looking at modelled statue near his couch.*) The clay supplied for that has served to fill the

holes I have made in this heavy doorway, and has served well. To-night should be the night! It is just ten days, and it is dark and stormy. The children will not fail me. Nor have I failed myself. The Captain of the Prison suspects nothing—the guards suspect nothing—yet here in my hand is Bianca's poniard which has cut me a way through the door of duress. Fortunate, indeed, that the very first day I spent in prison the warder kindly forgot two stout bed-sheets that had been left in my room. It was easy to cut them up into three thick bands, to keep the pieces hidden beneath my mattress, and when it was time to put the whole rope together, why then, my statue was nearly finished—only the back was hollow, and made an excellent hiding-place for the rope that shall aid my descent. Well, I must leave the statue, but without the rope, as a remembrance for the Captain of the Prison! (*Noise of GUARD coming without.*) The guard! Now! what does this mean? Quick, then! (*Throws himself on couch.*) (*Door unlocked.*)

*Enter CAPTAIN and GUARD. CELLINI  
feigns awaking from heavy sleep.*

CAPTAIN. Cellini, I disturb you, I fear, unexpectedly.

CELLINI (*seeming drowsy*). Why, Captain, it is indeed hardly your usual time to visit me!

CAPTAIN. No. Orders, my good friend, for we can call ourselves so in spite of duty. Orders. Why, what think you?

CELLINI (*still feigning drowsiness*). What think I? Of what? Of you, the best of castellans?

CAPTAIN. No, no. Of the absurd notion—come, come, I do not mind telling you this to explain my visit—that——

CELLINI. That you must have a very wary eye of me? Is that it? Ridiculous!

CAPTAIN. Ridiculous, indeed! You, an architect and engineer, of course, see that.

CELLINI. Of course, of course. But, good Captain and friend—for I may call you so?

CAPTAIN. Ay, indeed, so far as holds with my duty!

CELLINI. Well, then, is it not a little indiscreet for the kindest of prison-masters to put such stuff into the head of the most obedient of prisoners?

CAPTAIN. Tut, tut, man! You and I have fought side by side in old days, and I know you for an expert in fortification. Else, how could I speak to you so openly?

CELLINI. How indeed? I know San Angelo. But it is good in you to remember those old days!

CAPTAIN. It is a great relief in my weary round.  
And for their very remembrance let me tell  
you this much—no harm in telling it, since  
escape from here is impossible!

CELLINI (*with an assumed despondent tone*). Impossible! What was in your mind to tell me?

CAPTAIN. That the utmost efforts have been  
made from the Court of France to obtain your  
release.

CELLINI. And his Holiness is as obdurate, no  
doubt, as are these walls?

CAPTAIN. Even so. And the one is as hard as  
the other. On my word, I have stayed too  
long, and might think I have said too much,  
but for my knowing that hence there is no  
hope of escape. Guard! (*The GUARD, who have  
been standing at ease, fall to attention again.*)  
(*As he goes out with GUARD.*) Good-night,  
Cellini—sleep well!

CELLINI (*looking round after the door has shut*).  
Sleep? Sleep, good Captain? Hardly the  
time for that! I have nearly mastered the  
opposition of the door—now for the last touch  
of the workman's art! (*He attacks the door  
again with poniard. It opens.*) Thanks to  
Bianca and Bianca's mother! But now the  
descent! (*As he is seen to disappear through  
door at back the scene changes to exterior walls*

*of prison. He is seen descending by means of a rope, which during his last speech he has taken from the back of the statue. As he nears the ground BIANCA and ANTONIO advance from hiding to meet him.)*

BIANCA. Saved! Thank Heaven! Saved!

END OF ACT I

## ACT II

## FRANCE

## SCENE I

*A 'ride' in the forest of Fontainebleau. The fanfare and bustle of a hunt heard as the curtain rises, and enter the DUCHESS DE BEAUVAIS followed by courtiers, MONTLUC, FAUVILLE, and huntsmen.*

DUCHESS. I owe you I know not how many apologies, gentlemen, for thus interrupting you—you are but too courteous. You should have taken me at my word and left me and my stumbling horse alone!

MONTLUC. It seemed impossible that your horse would stumble. It *was* impossible that you should be left alone. (*To the others.*) Is it not so?

FAUVILLE. How, indeed, could any cavalier dream of leaving the Duchess de Beauvais without help?

DUCHESS. For so slight an accident! I owe you, I repeat, all thanks.

MONTLUC (*aside to FAUVILLE*). Have you ever heard of an intentional accident?

FAUVILLE (*aside to* MONTLUC). These things happen. Wise men know how to treat them. (*Aloud.*) Madame is sure of her devoted attendant's service?

DUCHESS. Yes, indeed, yes. Again, thanks. It was an awkward stumble, and an awkward moment. The King was hot upon the chase.

MONTLUC. You are right, and yet other things seemed to engage him.

DUCHESS. Other things? Ah! you remind me! his Majesty did seem a little distraught with other matters than those of the hunt.

FAUVILLE. A little? Why—but it were treason to speak what I noted.

DUCHESS. Treason? No such word when we talk in confidence. You did note, then, that his Majesty was apt to dwell on another art than that of the chase?

MONTLUC. Indeed, who could help it? His Majesty's devotion to one subject was truly remarkable.

DUCHESS. And what think you of that subject?

MONTLUC. Of Signor Cellini? 'Faith, I think he has too many talents for one man!

FAUVILLE. Or is thought to have!

DUCHESS. Which is much the same thing. A strange idea that our foundries in France are to be reorganised by him!

MONTLUC. Is it so strange, madam, when the King says there is no artist like him in France?

DUCHESS. Perhaps not strange, but we are in danger ourselves of making too much of this Cellini. But I must not detain you longer. Farewell, gentlemen, for the present! (*To huntsman.*) Keep my horse ready in the next glade.

(*Exeunt all but DUCHESS.*) Strange, what an influence that man has, and how I hate him for it! Cellini, who crosses me at every turn—Cellini, who thwarted my uncle, and killed my poor Giorgio—Cellini, whose ruin I will compass. Were it his ward, Antonio, that would be, indeed, a different tale. (*Rousing herself from train of thought.*) It is surely time for my tryst. And what will come of that? The Spaniard is a crafty man—but here he is.

*Enter SIDONIA alone.*

DUCHESS. You are true to your appointment.

SIDONIA. Who could fail to be on such an occasion?

DUCHESS. Ah! But, indeed, we have no time now for compliments. To your purpose, I beg.

SIDONIA. Then, madam, it is known to the Emperor, my master, as it is to all the world, that the Duchess's influence at the Court here is paramount. Now the Emperor, as your

Highness may know, must presently journey through France.

DUCHESS. And would like to be sure of so doing without let or hindrance?

SIDONIA. The Duchess has divined exactly. Any reprisal for the King's detention and imprisonment at Madrid would be unfortunate.

DUCHESS. I will use all influence I can to secure this. There was another matter?

SIDONIA. One of trifling interest in comparison. It would be a pleasure to the Emperor if he could persuade Signor Cellini to leave the King's service and enter his own.

DUCHESS (*aside*). Cellini again! (*Aloud.*) In that matter, too, I will do what I can—with great pleasure.

SIDONIA. The Duchess is all kindness. Before taking my leave I have to lay at her feet a small token of esteem from the Emperor. (*He presents a case.*)

DUCHESS (*opening it*). What a magnificent diamond! Why, I believe it is the very one the King has longed to possess.

SIDONIA. It is. My Imperial Master set the more store by it for that. And so (*as if going*)—

DUCHESS. One moment. Pray, tell his Imperial Majesty that I will—with his leave—write to convey my thanks and keep him advised of

what may happen. And that, in case of failure, I will join him at Ghent.

SIDONIA. The message shall be carefully given.  
(*Exit.*)

DUCHESS. A glorious gift indeed! Yet I walk among pitfalls! I fear for my influence with the King; I fear Diane de Poitiers, and love her no more than I do Cellini whom she so admires! And if I fail in this matter—but I must not fail——Some one approaches—Sidonia departed in the nick of time—It is Préville, the Lord Provost of Paris; and who is with him?

*Enter PRÉVILLE and D'ORBEC.*

DUCHESS (*bowing*). Monsieur de Préville, I am charmed by this meeting.

PRÉVILLE (*bowing low*). I am lucky, indeed, to meet the Duchess here. It is the merest chance that brings me to the very person I most wished to see. I think you know my friend Count d'Orbec. (DUCHESS and D'ORBEC exchange courtly salutations.) I would fain engage your special interest in him as my future son-in-law.

DUCHESS (*surprised*). Your future son-in-law! Why, I supposed—indeed I had heard——

PRÉVILLE. Something, no doubt, of a girl's foolish fancies! But my daughter is not so devoid of

wisdom but that she will end in being guided by my wishes. But the King's consent is needed—and I am wishful to solicit your paramount influence.

D'ORBEC (*with a foolish and disagreeable manner. PRÉVILLE has kept him in background*). To solicit your paramount influence!

DUCHESS (*annoyed out of herself*). One would think the wood was full of parrots all trained to the same word! Why, it is but half an hour ago (*checking herself*)—but, forgive me, my thoughts were straying.

D'ORBEC (*to PRÉVILLE*). It would seem so! Parrots in Fontainebleau!

PRÉVILLE. Hush! (*Aside.*) All the same, I wonder what she meant!

DUCHESS. Such poor influence as I may have is at your service, Monsieur de Préville, and at yours, Monsieur d'Orbec. (*PRÉVILLE and D'ORBEC bow.*)

PRÉVILLE. Madam, my deepest thanks! (*Noise of the hunt heard again.*)

DUCHESS. Hark! That is the note of recall. Gentlemen, shall we ride to the castle? It were well to anticipate the King's return. Will you follow me? (*Exeunt.*)

## SCENE II

*The Terrace at Fontainebleau (chairs, tables, etc., about stage. View of lake and Château). Courtiers discovered.*

THE KING *is announced and comes, down stage leading*  
DIANE DE POITIERS ; CELLINI, ANTONIO, COLOMBE,  
*and others follow. THE KING takes DIANE to*  
*table, where they sit.*

THE KING. We will rest here a while after the  
fatigues of the chase, Diane! You rode nobly,  
and you too, Signor Artist, and your pupil. A  
pity, to be sure, that the Duchess was thrown  
out!

DIANE. And strange that so fine a horsewoman  
should be put out for so slight a stumble!  
For my part, I confess that I always find the  
Duchess's presence somewhat—let us say over-  
whelming.

THE KING (*slightly displeased*). Ah! Cellini, are  
you installed yet in your new studio at the  
Palace Nevers?

CELLINI. Which your Majesty has so graciously  
assigned to me, a gift for which I cannot offer  
thanks enough (*bending on one knee*).

THE KING (*raising him*). Tut, tut, man! no  
thanks. There are many kings, there is only  
one Cellini! But as to the studio?

CELLINI. Sire, my adopted daughter is there, and the workmen are ready. She prays my instant return to give the last touches.

THE KING. Nay, you must not leave us so soon. There is the bronze statue of Jupiter to talk of. Have you the design with you?

CELLINI. It is here, Sire (*producing it*).

COLOMBE (*to ANTONIO*). So you are to live in the Palace Nevers. We live ourselves in the dependancy, and thus we shall be neighbours.

ANTONIO. Ah! Mademoiselle, what a joy for me!

THE KING (*to DIANE, with design in his hand*). Do but look at the splendour and beauty of the lines.

DIANE. Indeed it is magnificent—it will be a masterpiece!

CELLINI. There is yet another design, Sire.

THE KING. Let us see it at once. (*He has just taken it from CELLINI and laid it on table, when enter DUCHESS, PRÉVILLE, and D'ORBEC.*) Welcome back, Madame. We trust you are not hurt.

DUCHESS. Sire, it was a mere nothing.

DIANE (*aside*). I am very sure it was.

DUCHESS. Monsieur de Prévile and Monsieur d'Orbec met me by chance and escorted me back. And, Sire, I would fain proffer a request.

THE KING. Speak on—what is it?

DUCHESS. It is for your Majesty's consent to the marriage of Monsieur d'Orbec to Mademoiselle de Prévile. (*Movement of surprise and dismay, COLOMBE and ANTONIO.*)

THE KING (*indifferently*). Why not?

DIANE (*hastily*). I think I can point out some reasons to your Majesty!

THE KING. What reasons?

DIANE. You will see them there, Sire. (*Looking at COLOMBE.*)

ANTONIO (*to CELLINI*). This is iniquitous! (*About to move forward.*)

CELLINI. Wait!

COLOMBE (*overcoming natural reluctance and falling at THE KING'S feet*). It is true, Sire! Ought a girl to be mated unwilling to one who is not of her choice?

THE KING (*to DIANE*). I should scarce have applauded her choice, I confess.

COLOMBE (*seeing THE KING still careless and amused*). Oh! Sire! Bethink you this is a great and weighty matter! On one side a father who, I know not why, would force upon his daughter a marriage most unwelcome; on the other, that daughter who has nought to trust to but the help of Heaven and that of him whose authority comes before her father's—her King.

Think ! It rests with you, the sovereign and guardian of the land, to help or to prevent a great wrong, for a wrong it is and must be—a wrong that calls for, that demands, opposing !

THE KING (*half convinced*). Yet, child, every day such marriages are made and are happy.

COLOMBE. Do not believe it, Sire—they can never be happy ! Women are clever to conceal unhappiness.

THE KING. But girls who know nothing of the world !

COLOMBE. Girls, Sire, have the woman's gift of instinct that teaches them where to trust and where to doubt and to shrink away in dread ! Oh ! Sire, help me !

THE KING. You have spoken boldly, girl, but, perchance, you have not hurt your cause.

CELLINI (*to ANTONIO*). A brave girl, and worthy a better fate than that ill-looking wretch.

DUCHESS (*to THE KING*). And what, pray, Sire, of a father's authority ?

CELLINI (*swiftly stepping forward*). The girl has given her answer, madam ! The King's authority overrides it !

THE KING. Rise, child. This shall be thought of. (*He turns to DUCHESS, as COLOMBE rejoins CELLINI and ANTONIO.*)

DIANE (*to PRÉVILLE*). I think, sir, your suit is

answered. Tell me, how should this marriage have profited you? (*Looking keenly at him.*) I see, I was right. This was no question of marriage, but one of sale and barter! (*She turns from him in scorn.*)

THE KING. Enough of this. Cellini, you spoke well just now, but let us turn to pleasanter matters—to your great art.

CELLINI (*bowing*). Sire!

THE KING. When you take final possession of the Palace Nevers——

DUCHESS (*provoked beyond reserve*). Which your Majesty promised to the Lord Provost of Paris!

THE KING (*sternly and coldly*). Madam, you heard our wish to talk of art. That is no concern of Monsieur de Préville's. Let him stay in the Châtelet, or his other two houses—the dependancy of Nevers, for instance. Enough. (*He turns to CELLINI and DIANE.*)

DUCHESS (*to PRÉVILLE*). We are outwitted!

PRÉVILLE. And it is a heavy blow to me. (*They retire up, leaving stage for KING, CELLINI, and others.*)

THE KING. And now, Cellini, I am the more glad you should be at the Palace Nevers, because I can so easily pay quiet visits to your studio, though, alas! not yet a while.

DIANE. Why not, Sire?

THE KING. Affairs of State—the arranging for the Emperor's visit and journey—by my word, Cellini, I believe statecraft is the only branch of Art, if Art it is, you have left alone!

CELLINI. Sire, we artists are wise to leave politics alone. We might, from sheer artistic habit, turn a dummy document or a feigned alliance into a real one!

THE KING. And so vivify a statue made only for destruction! But now to reality—the reality found only in an artist's mind. (*Taking up design.*) Diane, what do you make of this?

DIANE. A design for a group, Sire.

CELLINI. Ay, Sire, and for such a group as has never been dreamt of, far less seen! This figure here is to be a colossal statue of Wisdom—King Solomon—cast in the likeness of the great King Francis the First of France.

THE KING. But——

CELLINI (*not hearing in his excitement*). At each corner—look!—an emblem of what a great sovereign's reign can do for a great people. See—here War, a stern necessity, and, looking it in the very face, its opposite, Peace, a goddess more nearly dependent on the God of War than some statesmen know. Here, see again, Art, with face uplifted to the protecting Monarch; and again, Religion, with-

out which Art may well be a pitfall. But, see you, I have made Religion wide-eyed and full of hope; and, if I have done wrong in that, may our Mother Church forgive me! (*This speech given with an artist's headlong enthusiasm.*)

THE KING (*who has caught fire from him*). Cellini, you must carry out this design in gold. We will not delay you longer from Paris. Only—I cannot give up my statue of Jupiter. Let me have that first!

CELLINI (*pleased, and still excited*). Sire! You shall have the Jupiter in ten days!

THE KING. In ten days! So be it. And so farewell till our next meeting, and may that be soon! (*THE KING leads away off. All follow closely except DUCHESS and PRÉVILLE.*)

DUCHESS (*to PRÉVILLE, rapidly*). You heard? That statue of Jupiter must never be cast!

PRÉVILLE. How would your Highness prevent it?

DUCHESS. Trust for that to the wit of a slighted woman! I tell you that statue *shall* never be cast! I swear it.

PRÉVILLE. One question more! *Why* would your Highness prevent it?

DUCHESS. Fool! Did you not hear Cellini's promise that it should be ready in ten days? Do you not know that failure to keep that

promise will be Cellini's ruin?—ay, his death even!—Prevent that promise being kept, and we are revenged on the man we both have reason to hate! *I* will prevent it, and I tell you surely that this braggart's death-warrant is as good as signed and sealed!

END OF ACT II

## ACT III

## SCENE I

CELLINI'S studio in Paris. Arranged much as in Act I. Scene I. for studio at Rome, as to doors at back opening to the workshop and foundry. R. of stage a long window looking on the gardens dependancy of the Hotel Nevers. At back L. window giving partial view of Paris. Guitar accompaniment in orchestra before rise of curtain. As curtain rises,

BIANCA discovered with guitar.

BIANCA (*sings*).

Morning's light must pass away,  
Evening must enshroud the day,  
Evening's mists are ill to bear,  
Mary, Mother, hear my prayer!

When the heavy-rolling night  
Blinds a while dear Heaven's light,  
All that's good seems far from ken,  
Mary, Mother, hear me then!

(*Moving to window*)—

Clearest sky, no cloud nor haze,  
Yet the lightning's fire may blaze,  
When the world seems bright and fair,  
Mary, keep me in thy care!

(*During last verse CELLINI has entered quietly. He now comes down.*)

CELLINI. At private devotions, child? Why not at church with Colombe and Antonio?

BIANCA. To speak truth, dear guardian, I hesitated to leave you alone. I stayed in hope I might persuade you to take some rest. You need it sorely.

CELLINI. You are too anxious, child. I will rest, I promise you, as soon as I have fulfilled my promise to the King as to the great bronze statue of Jupiter. That comes before all else. And in that I know not how I should have fared without your help and Antonio's. Antonio is very good in giving me so much of his time. He has other matters to think of—such stuff as must one time or another fill a young man's mind. He is fortunate too! There is no fairer nor more fascinating damsel than Colombe de Préville, and (*laughing*) there are times when I wish myself in Antonio's place!

BIANCA (*aside*). Oh! if he knew how he wounds me! (*Aloud.*) Indeed—I—Mademoiselle de Préville is—— (*Sinks back.*)

CELLINI. Why, child, what is this? You are faint—you have been too anxious over my Jupiter—the fiery breaths from the foundry have overcome you. Let us try the fresh air. We will talk of the Jupiter under the bright sky and draw happiness and hope for the future!

BIANCA. Ah! yes, let us go.

CELLINI. One word first—Pietro! (ALEXANDRE *appears from door to foundry.*)

ALEXANDRE. Master, the watch just now is mine.  
All is well.

CELLINI. Good, then. When does Pietro return?

ALEXANDRE. Soon, master, I believe.

CELLINI (*half to himself*). That is well too. (*Carefully.*) Remember, the very utmost watchfulness is of the last importance. One moment of neglect might ruin the whole work and (*aside*) my reputation with it. (*Aloud.*) So, I shall be back soon. Meanwhile, be wary on your life and for my plighted word! (*Exit with BIANCA.*)

ALEXANDRE (*solus*). And may you stay away long enough for me to shatter your fortunes and make my own! Ha! the nephew of Giorgio, the half-Corsican, is not likely to forget the vendetta! And when, besides, the Duchess has promised me two hundred gold crown pieces if the statue is not cast in time! And future advancement to boot! The double stake is surely worth some risk! I must not touch the statue itself—that is sure discovery—but there are other means which shall not fail me, and then, Signor Cellini, your day is

come. (*Knocking heard at door L.*) It must be they. Cellini has been watched out of the house. (*Opens door.*) (*Enter DUCHESS and PRÉVILLE. The DUCHESS remains in comparative background.*)

PRÉVILLE. Is it done? Is the famous statue marred, or is it yet to do?

ALEXANDRE. Not yet done, my Lord. Nor can I touch the statue. Yet it shall not be cast.

PRÉVILLE. So much the better. It were a shame if these Italian fortune-seekers were to oust honest Frenchmen—were it not? And the good Frenchman who should prevent it would be sure of the reward of merit (*significantly*).

ALEXANDRE. Even without that I would find means—I *will* find means.

DUCHESS. You *must* find means—even if they are to rid us of the sculptor himself!

ALEXANDRE (*terrified, to PRÉVILLE*). What may this mean? The sculptor! Why, such a deed would seal my own doom!

DUCHESS (*coming forward*). Not if I protect you!

ALEXANDRE (*recognising her*). The Duchess de Beauvais!

DUCHESS. Your friend and ally in this matter!

ALEXANDRE. But, your Highness, his Majesty's protection is given to my master.

DUCHESS. His Majesty takes interest in the

living, not in the dead. But it will not come to that. You have been frightened by a chance word. (*To PRÉVILLE.*) A word worth using to waken his fears and still them. (*To ALEXANDRE.*) No, the statue is all we aim at—now, at least. Your means are certain? you are sure of them? (*Still playing on ALEXANDRE'S fears.*)

ALEXANDRE. Your Highness, the only thing I fear against my scheme is the watchfulness of Signor Antonio!

PRÉVILLE. That, surely, may be evaded. What are Signor Antonio's customs?

ALEXANDRE. One custom of his, my Lord, may interest you. He meets your daughter constantly in the garden yonder!

DUCHESS (*angrily*). He does! Prévile, this must be stopped at once—(*recollecting herself*) because once you arrest him there he is out of our way here. (*To ALEXANDRE.*) When do these meetings take place?

ALEXANDRE. If my Lord would have a watch kept to-night——

PRÉVILLE. It shall be done. I can arrest him there.

DUCHESS. And when it is done send me news, I pray you. (*Cathedral bells heard.*) Listen! Service is over—we must not be found here!

Come, my Lord! (*Exeunt, shown out by ALEXANDRE, who retires through door to foundry.*)

*Enter* BIANCA, ANTONIO, and CELLINI.

CELLINI. A pleasant walk, children, though if I had these bells to deal with they should give yet better music. But we have other metal to think of now. Alexandre! (*ALEXANDRE appears.*) Has any one been here?

ALEXANDRE. No one, master.

CELLINI. And the foundry? But stay, I will see for myself that all is in order. Come you with me. (*Exeunt at back ALEXANDRE and CELLINI.*) (*Manent* BIANCA and ANTONIO.)

ANTONIO. Bianca, I know you are very busy in helping the master. But have you any spare time in the—in the evening?

BIANCA (*rallyingly*). Such spare time as I have found before to play duenna?

ANTONIO. Yes; but it is no laughing matter to me.

BIANCA. Nor to me, dear, believe me. Especially since I have heard from Colombe's own lips the dreariness of her life—her father's constant endeavour to force her to accept the attentions of that fatuous fool d'Orbec. Ah! my brother (*caressingly*), she has a better taste.

ANTONIO. Oh! Bianca, could I be sure——

BIANCA. That you have many advantages over Count d'Orbec?

ANTONIO. No; but that, apart from that, Colombe could care for me!

BIANCA. That you must ask her, if you have not already asked and got her answer. Brother dear, what think you sisters were made for?

ANTONIO. To be angels to their brothers.

BIANCA. A commonplace answer! They were made to keep their brothers safe in self-conceit! (*Knocking heard at door.*) What can that be? I will see. Call Cellini! (*ANTONIO goes to call CELLINI, who enters with him as BIANCA goes to door and exit.*)

CELLINI (*moodily to ANTONIO*). All is well, so far as I can see, and yet I have one of my strange presentiments. Why did you recall me?

BIANCA (*reappearing*). Because, dear guardian, that knocking below meant that the King is here, in private, of course. Shall I myself admit him at once?

CELLINI (*still moody*). Of course, child, of course. (*Aside.*) I wonder why he should come just now. (*BIANCA has opened door for the King, who enters in high good-humour, accompanied by DUCHESS, DIANE, and COURTIERS.*) (*Exit BIANCA.*)

THE KING (*as CELLINI advances to receive him*).

Ah! good Cellini, you see King comes to visit King! I have used my first freedom from the discussion—how it wearies me!—of the Emperor's journey to visit a *friend*. (CELLINI *bows deeply*.) It is pleasant indeed to throw off Kingship for a while! But that *you* can never do. Here (*looking round at works of art*) are your subjects to remind you always of your monarchy.

CELLINI. Sire, in truth, my subjects, as you deign to call them, are my tyrants. Once I have begun to make a work of art I am its slave. I cannot rest till it is finished.

THE KING (*amused*). 'Faith, nor I. Only, with my works of art the finishing is apt to be unexpected. Whereas you always know what the end will be!

CELLINI. Sire, I always know what I *mean* the end to be.

THE KING (*hit, but keeping a careless air*). I wish you joy, brother monarch. Let us examine together some of your people!

CELLINI. Here, Sire, is a statuette of Mercury in gold.

THE KING. And would I had an ambassador with such winged feet. But (*the artistic seriousness coming on him*) by my word, Cellini, the grace of this is something exquisite! Look,

Diane, look, Duchess: cannot you almost see the movement?

DIANE. Indeed it is beautiful and strong, like one whose feet must needs carry him to the heights!

DUCHESS (*coldly*). It reminds me with a far-off recollection of the style of Marccone, one of our greatest masters!

CELLINI (*with courtesy and irony*). Madam, I was one of his pupils. It was when I made an early design for that very figure that he dismissed me with the words: 'Go, boy, you have nothing more to learn from me!'

THE KING (*getting bored according to his well-known wont*). Ah, ha! Cellini, now for something else for an unworthy brother in art to see and admire!

CELLINI (*falling in with his mood*). Here, then, is a goblet adorned with, on one side, the figure of Discord (*glances at* DUCHESS), on the other with that of Harmony (*glances at* DIANE). How think you of it?

THE KING. Why, I think, had the types been taken from life they could not be truer! What think you, Diane?

DIANE. Thought is too strange for familiar use.

THE KING. And you, Duchess?

DUCHESS. Thought is a sharp weapon; yet action is sharper. (*Interchange of looks.*)

THE KING. Another, my artist!

CELLINI. Here is the goblet that pairs with the other—Peace and Love vanquishing Rage and Envy. It is all allegorical!

THE KING (*amused*). To be sure! And now?

CELLINI. And now, I pray, a truce to my own work in favour of my pupil's, Signor Antonio. Here is a necklace of his design and of his workmanship which, dare I say it, does more than credit to his master?

THE KING (*looking at it carelessly*). A fine work indeed. But, Cellini! (*Engages CELLINI in talk.*)

DIANE. A tasteful work!

DUCHESS. A finer taste might say a magnificent work! The pupil (*turning to catch Antonio's attention*) will soon rival the master!

ANTONIO (*modestly*). That, madam, no artist could hope to do, but your Highness's approval of my following my master is a great honour.

DUCHESS (*low*). I see your master has not found a central jewel yet?

ANTONIO. Not yet.

DUCHESS. Say nothing to your master. I may find you a jewel for your own necklace—it

shall be of your own making. (ANTONIO *looks astonished*. THE KING *and* CELLINI *take stage*.)

THE KING. Then, Cellini, I understand that, graciously according my wish, you will put the Jupiter before all else. And, by-the-by, *when* was it to be finished?

CELLINI. To-morrow was the day fixed. And aught that is fixed by the King——

THE KING. Nay, by the King of Artists! You forget, it is you who are monarch here!

CELLINI. Then, Sire, to-morrow. Cellini has never yet failed to keep such an engagement to the minute.

THE KING (*to* DIANE). You see our Cellini has all the virtues, punctuality among them. 'Faith, I must try to borrow some. Then, Cellini, to-morrow be it, and on the next day your warmest admirer will be here to see the work!

THE DUCHESS (*aside*). Which shall not be seen.

THE KING. And now, friend and artist, is there nothing to tempt a student's curiosity beyond those curtains?

CELLINI. The workshop and the foundry. There is little to see. Would it please you see that little?

THE KING. Nothing would please me better.

Diane, Duchess, are you of our company?

DIANE (*bows assent*).

DUCHESS. I am so interested in these designs that, with permission, I would fain study them yet awhile.

THE KING. I venture to give permission in our host's name. Cellini, we follow. (*Exeunt KING, CELLINI, DIANE, through curtains at back.*)

DUCHESS. Now, Signor Antonio, show me more of your work.

ANTONIO. Madam, indeed, it is not worth your trouble, but here is a group of Cupid's followers circling round Venus. Only I lack a model for the face of the central figure.

DUCHESS. Can that be so difficult to find?

ANTONIO. I have not found it yet.

DUCHESS. Among ordinary models I can understand that. But among the ladies of the Court, some are esteemed handsome.

ANTONIO. O, madam, which of them would so far condescend?

DUCHESS. Condescend? Let me borrow a phrase from my royal master to say that the condescension would be on your part. But, that reminds me, I have heard—the ears of a Court hear all things—that you know Mademoiselle Colombe de Préville.

ANTONIO. I do.

DUCHESS. And—I must not press you, but I speak in your interest, which, believe me, I have sincerely at heart.

ANTONIO. Oh! Madam!

DUCHESS. Yes, it is true, there are people to whom one's heart leaps out in sympathy! Even at my age—how old think you am I?

ANTONIO. The Duchess is of those who are always young.

DUCHESS (*a little piqued*). A good answer. Yet I am not so old as my enemies would make me out—at least not too old to appreciate fully art and artists. But, for Mademoiselle de Préville, I know not how far it may concern you, but her hand, in spite of what you heard at Fontainebleau, is irrevocably promised to the Count d'Orbec.

ANTONIO. To him! To him!

DUCHESS. Yes, even so. We cannot always attain what we wish, but there are sometimes greater prizes to be won! Come, let us see about this necklace. A jewel is wanting in the centre. Well, I will supply the want! (*Produces the Spanish diamond.*) Take it from me. (*ANTONIO takes it.*) From me! It was a present from the King, but he will scarce recognise it in the setting. Besides—but I

hear them returning from the foundry—you will show me the necklace when it is finished!

ANTONIO (*who has been innocently surprised all through*) bows. (*Enter* DIANE, CELLINI, and THE KING.)

THE KING. What a transformation, Diane, in what, if I remember, was the Great Hall! and what things of beauty will be born there! Ha! Cellini? (THE KING *has now resumed his air of authority.*)

CELLINI. If it pleases Heaven, Sire, all shall be done that may please you.

DIANE (*aside to him*). If it pleases Heaven, Cellini? You have forgotten the Duchess!

CELLINI. Indeed, I doubt if she has a place there, but I note your warning!

THE KING (*returning from looking at gold ornaments on shelf*). Then it is understood, Cellini, the work will be finished to-morrow, and the next day we will come in all our royalty to admire it! Farewell till then!

CELLINI. Sire! (*Bows and opens door for exit of* DIANE, DUCHESS, and THE KING. DIANE, *who goes out last, gives him a warning glance, to which he responds. The DUCHESS before going out has given her hand to* ANTONIO *to kiss.*) (CELLINI and ANTONIO alone.) A strange King, my boy, and I say it who have seen

many potentates! A good heart, I believe, but a wandering fancy! Where is Bianca?

ANTONIO. I will go and see, Master. (*Exit.*)

CELLINI. A strange King indeed! Were I in his place—but, as I told him, the artist is either above or below the care of statecraft. Ah! here comes the child of my heart—child I must call her.

*Enter BIANCA and ANTONIO.*

CELLINI. Child, you have missed a pretty scene of comedy in actual life! Jealousy, intrigue, reservation, outspokenness! There was nothing wanting but love! Though, in a sense, that may not have been wanting! What had the Duchess to say to you, my boy?

BIANCA. The Duchess?

CELLINI. Yes, she and Antonio had an interview all to themselves while I showed the workshop and foundry to the King and to the Countess de Poitiers.

BIANCA (*with increased significance*). The Duchess! What *did* she say to you, Antonio?

ANTONIO. She admired my designs more than I could expect!

BIANCA (*with another intonation*). The Duchess!

CELLINI. Well, what else?

ANTONIO. Why, something very strange. She gave me the jewel wanted for the necklace!

BIANCA. Ah!

CELLINI. Indeed! What jewel?

ANTONIO. This—for the centre-piece! (*Produces it.*)

BIANCA. Oh! Antonio! How magnificent a jewel!

CELLINI. Even you then, womanlike, are blinded by the splendour of a gem!

BIANCA. Oh! but such a gem!

CELLINI. Let me look again. The Duchess gave you *this* diamond? It is impossible!

ANTONIO. Indeed she did; and, if impossible, the impossible has happened as you have oft told me it may!

CELLINI. And, when it does happen, beware! Bianca! come close, look nearly at that clasp. What do you see?

BIANCA. Your private mark, Master!

CELLINI. Well, Antonio, did the Duchess tell you where this diamond came from?

ANTONIO. She told me it was a present from King Francis to herself.

CELLINI (*angry*). Then she told you a lie!

BIANCA. Guardian, Master, what do you mean?

CELLINI. I mean this! This diamond has been often through my hands, never through the

King's. It was last in the hands of the Emperor Charles the Fifth. That the Duchess should have it to give away means mischief, and more than mischief—treason!

END OF SCENE I

SCENE II

*Evening of the same day. The garden in the Nevers dependancy. COLOMBE discovered. She sits on bench with book in hand.*

COLOMBE. So the time drags on, and only Heaven knows the weariness of the waiting! Bianca should be here almost now, and—and Antonio! Why do I think of him? Why should I think of him? And yet, I do think of him. I think of him as a protector, and I have a strange feeling that I now need a protector as I never did before! The garden seems to me full of fantastic forms, of fantastic steps. I am almost certain I heard steps but now. Dame Perrine has promised to be watchful, but she is old and I am young, and it may be foolish! Who knows? Is it foolish to care for Antonio? Do I care for him? Is it right to confess so much even to myself? I hear

steps again—ah! this time, they are the steps of friends!

*Enter BIANCA and ANTONIO.*

BIANCA. We have come, Colombe!

COLOMBE. How gracious on your part—and on your brother's!

ANTONIO. The graciousness surely is on your side in receiving us so kindly! For how much kindness counts in this world!

BIANCA. You are right, Antonio, and you and I have a treasure of kindness that never fails us!

COLOMBE. There! ah! there is the difference between your fate and mine! The great, the famous Cellini is ever ready to help you, you have your love as brother and sister to bear you up. But I!

BIANCA. Ah! Colombe! I had feared as to your suffering!

COLOMBE. Suffering! To live in a huge house which holds every treasure except that one most needed—Love! I tell you again it is a loveless house!

BIANCA. Poor Colombe!

COLOMBE. Ay, poor Colombe!

ANTONIO. But, Colombe, cannot love make a way into your life? Is that impossible?

COLOMBE. Impossible! How could even love

break through the barriers that my father has set up?

ANTONIO. I think *I* know, in spite of the Count d'Orbec.

BIANCA. The boy is right. But, Colombe, I fear too much that you have reason for alarm! I thought as we came in that there were footsteps behind us! Can that be so?

COLOMBE. I do not well know, but this I confess to you, I fear the Count d'Orbec! I fear my father!

ANTONIO. The Count d'Orbec! How can you use his name as a thing of fear? Oh! could I but meet him!

BIANCA. Antonio, you are too like your great master, Cellini, in hot-blooded impetuosity! If you did meet Orbec, what then? You might kill him, perchance, and what but harm could come from such a deed?

ANTONIO. Well, enough on that matter. I shall not seek out Count d'Orbec. But what *does* want seeking out is the sound of footsteps of which you told me, Bianca!

BIANCA. I will see to that. Rest you here the while.

ANTONIO. But, Bianca!

BIANCA. I can guard myself! Stay you here!  
(*Exit BIANCA.*)

ANTONIO. Is it right to have let her go alone?

COLOMBE. She has the spirit of strength that belongs to her people!

ANTONIO. Does that spirit belong to me, Colombe?

COLOMBE. Signor di Gaddi!

ANTONIO. Ah! no, there must be no use of forms between us—not, that is, if I can persuade you to my thought, Colombe! Colombe, you must have discerned that thought. I love you, I love you with all my heart and soul, and yet again I love you. You must have known it—tell me, have you not known it?

COLOMBE. Antonio, I—I have sometimes thought—I—perhaps have not dared to think, or perhaps I have dared to think too much.

ANTONIO. Nay, you have thought too little. Again, I love you; and you? and you?

COLOMBE. And I—yes, it is true—I——

ANTONIO. Confession, then! Confession!

COLOMBE. Yes; I confess, then, I do love you.

ANTONIO. Dearest of all beings that enrich this earth!

*Enter BIANCA.*

BIANCA. Stay, I must engage your attention immediately—forgive me, it must be so. The hearing of the footsteps was but too true a fact. I saw without doubt, but now, two figures of men who were cloaked, and whose hats

were pressed down on their faces, waiting in the garden. I saw your companion Perrine come out from the house. I saw them order her back. I saw them go with her. As they went I saw them drop a letter, this letter. I do not know which of them dropped it. Now, note this. We have to deal with spies at every turn. Therefore we must not be too scrupulous. See, I open the letter in your presence, Colombe, in yours, Antonio. So! what think you?

ANTONIO. What should we think?

BIANCA (*reading letter*). I open the letter, I tell you, without scruple and without remorse. By heaven! The Duchess's diamond—the Duchess's diamond was a present from the Emperor Charles v.!

ANTONIO. Impossible!

BIANCA. True—see for yourself. (*Shows him the letter.*) And now, Antonio, fly. Your very life is in danger.

ANTONIO. Nay, I will see this matter out, and set my life upon the chance.

BIANCA. You may be right, Antonio. Meanwhile, observe: I keep the letter, I hide it. Footsteps! and be sure no footsteps that come to-night bode any good to us.

*Enter PRÉVILLE and D'ORBEC.*

PRÉVILLE (*seeing ANTONIO*). You here! (*To COLOMBE.*) Mademoiselle de Préville, I cannot too strongly describe your conduct. Count d'Orbec, I appeal to you as the young lady's affianced husband.

D'ORBEC. Why, by my faith, Monsieur de Préville, I am. Yes, the daughter of the Lord Provost of Paris—great honour. Yes, I—well, I suppose I am—and really——

PRÉVILLE (*aside to him*). You fool, speak to the man!

D'ORBEC (*aside, confused, to PRÉVILLE*). Ah! to be sure. (*To ANTONIO.*) Perchance the lady's interest may be engaged elsewhere, perhaps. (*Looking at PRÉVILLE.*)

PRÉVILLE (*aside to him furiously*). You idiot, he is an adventurer!

D'ORBEC (*aside to PRÉVILLE*). Yes, so he is. (*Aloud.*) Perhaps her interest is engaged by this remarkable adventurer!

ANTONIO. Adventurer! You despicable little ruffian! Adventurer! You miserable hanger-on to great folk! Adventurer! You wretched parasite! Adventurer! You call me, the great Cellini's pupil, an adventurer? It is too great an honour for you that Cellini's favourite

pupil should strike you as I now strike you. (*Strikes him across the face with a glove. D'ORBEC is completely confused. PRÉVILLE advances.*)

PRÉVILLE. Signor di Gaddi!

COLOMBE (*interposing*). No. Now it is for me to speak. Father, I tell you plainly, and once and for all, this is my future husband—I will marry none but him.

PRÉVILLE. Is that your resolve?

COLOMBE. It is my resolve, that never can be broken.

PRÉVILLE. Then, at least, I know! You women are best out of the way now. (*They retire terrified before his calm resolution.*) As for you, Signor di Gaddi. (*He blows a blast from a whistle which he takes from his doublet, on which his men appear suddenly and silently, and seize ANTONIO.*) (*ANTONIO struggles and is overpowered.*) Take him to the Châtelet. And (*to COLOMBE*) for you, my beautiful and dutiful daughter, you shall have news from me tomorrow, and that early. (*Exeunt all but COLOMBE and BIANCA.*)

COLOMBE (*to BIANCA*). May Heaven help us! I see you do not know my father, you do not know what a terror he is. Did you know it, you would be as distraught with fear as

I am. What can we do? Oh! what can we do?

BIANCA. Hush, child. No need for such terror, I assure you. You ask me what shall we do: I will tell you. (*She holds up the letter.*) We shall do this. We shall fight our enemies with the weapons that they themselves, our enemies, have given us. This letter is a weapon. I must put it into hands stronger than mine. I shall put it into the hands of the one man who, with the help of God, will vanquish all his foes at the very hour, at the very minute, when his foes feel sure of triumph. I shall put it into the hands of the man who saved me from worse than death—I shall put it into the hands of Benvenuto Cellini!

END OF ACT III

## ACT IV

## SCENE I

*A room in the house of DIANE DE POITIERS.*

DIANE *discovered at table with letter in her hand.* PAGE *with chocolate tray in his hand by her side.*

PAGE. Has my lady any further orders?

DIANE (*abstractedly—still intent on the letter*).

No! Yes! stay! Give orders that *no one* who comes to the gate is to be sent away without my knowledge. You understand. *No one* on any account. (*Exit PAGE.*) A letter from Cellini, and it brings ill news. Antonio arrested, and Cellini alarmed, both for him and for Colombe! Let me read again! (*Reading letter.*) 'I cannot, dare not, leave the casting of the Jupiter! It is all-important that the King should not be disappointed in that!' It is indeed—I know it well, and, what is more, the Duchess knows it well—too well, mayhap.

How does Cellini go on? 'My hands are therefore tied, and I fear it is but little I can do. But *you* can do much, and I am sure you will. Be surprised at nothing, and, above all, be ready to receive a wanderer in distress.' A wanderer in distress! Does he mean Colombe? Who else indeed can it be? And yet how should she find her way here? It is strange!

*Enter PAGE.*

DIANE. Well, what is it?

PAGE. Your orders, madam, that no visitor should be dismissed without your knowledge.

DIANE. Well?

PAGE. There is a veiled woman at the gate. She will give no name, but says that you will certainly receive her.

DIANE. Good. Admit her at once. (*Exit PAGE.*) It surely must be Colombe!

*Re-enter PAGE, who shows in COLOMBE and exit.*

DIANE. It must be you, Colombe!

COLOMBE. Even so. I have escaped from my father's tyranny, and, by Cellini's advice, I have come for refuge to you.

DIANE. You have done well, dear, well. You shall surely find refuge here until we can see a way out of these present and pressing

troubles! (*She strikes a bell on table. Enter waiting-maid, to whom:*)

DIANE. Take mademoiselle to my private rooms. She will remain here a while. (*As they go out R., enter PAGE L.*)

PAGE. Madam, his Majesty the King!

DIANE (*aside*). Now Heaven grant me courage and wisdom! (*Rising to meet THE KING, who enters.*) Sire! (*Exit PAGE.*)

THE KING. Diane, I have come to you in a troubled mood—nay, more, I have come to you as after a storm a mariner seeks a quiet harbour, knowing well that soon he must face another tempest.

DIANE. Sire, you honour me too much; but, at least, you know my unswerving devotion to your Majesty.

THE KING. Ay, Diane, nor do I know any one else in whom I can confide absolutely. I have done a foolish thing in letting the Emperor pass unharmed, unimpeded, through France. I trusted to the representations of the Duchess.

DIANE. But surely——

THE KING. There was the folly. I should have remembered only how he treated me when I was in his power. Since the Emperor's passage there has been constant trouble. There is treason somewhere. I should have trusted no

one. Indeed, whom can I trust? I suspect the Duchess, I suspect many, ay, even Cellini. How do I know I am not far too open in talk with him?

DIANE. I think your Majesty need not distrust Cellini.

THE KING. How shall a King put trust in any one round him—except indeed in you, Diane, and when I look in your face I do trust you completely. Now I have freely told you my troubles. Can you propose a remedy?

DIANE. O! if I could!

THE KING. I feel sure your wit will find one. Perchance I make too much of this. Maybe I am too suspicious!

DIANE. Sire, I will not hide from you that I heartily wish *some* of these suspicions had asserted themselves earlier. They have been present to me for some time past.

THE KING. Well, well—what do you advise? what do you think?

DIANE. I think that if your Majesty trusts me yet further, and gives me certain authority, I can prove my suspicions to be right. And then, no doubt, the guilty person would be banished?

THE KING. Banished? And why not executed? Does not treason merit that?

DIANE. Oh, Sire, I could not bear to have on my conscience that I had brought such a fate on a fellow-creature, however vile and ungrateful. There should surely be time for repentance.

THE KING (*aside*). A fellow-creature! She does not say whether man or woman. Well, desperate ills need desperate remedies. (*Aloud.*) Diane! I will trust you all in all. Ask anything that I can grant to help you.

DIANE. Then one thing only—your Majesty's order that I act by your authority, and that a guard may be placed under my disposal and at my orders. Remember, Sire, your own words at the battle of Pavia: 'All is lost save honour.' Honour is to be saved now and wrong-doing punished!

THE KING. Diane! all shall be as you wish. (*He writes order at table.*) Half the guard who came here with me shall be at your disposal at once. Should you want more help later on, you need but ask. With these weapons you ought not to fail.

DIANE. I *shall* not fail, Sire. Who lives shall see!

THE KING (*exit, repeating to himself*). Who lives shall see!

DIANE (*alone, strikes bell. Enter PAGE*). I wish to see the Captain of the Guard stationed without. (*Exit PAGE; returns showing in*

CAPTAIN OF GUARD, *and then exit again.*)  
Captain, you see by this (*showing signed paper*)  
that I do not act without authority. I wish  
you to go with some of your men at once to the  
Châtelet, and, by virtue of this order, demand  
the instant release of Signor di Gaddi. Then  
take him privily to the Louvre and let him wait  
there for further news from me. Then bring  
me back the King's order.

CAPTAIN. Madam, it shall be done forthwith.  
(*Exit.*)

DIANE. And now, Duchess de Beauvais, you  
have done me the one service you *can* do me.  
You have shown me your hand, and we shall  
soon see who wins in the game between  
Treason and Justice!

#### END OF SCENE I

#### SCENE II

CELLINI'S *studio in the Nevers Palace. It is specially important that there should be a profusion of gold and silver cups, trays, jugs, statuettes, etc., on the shelves, as well as handsome furniture 'practicable' for destruction about stage. Also prominent on shelf a large gold crucifix.*

BIANCA (*discovered*). My mind misgives me  
terribly for Cellini and for his great enterprise.

It is nearly three days since he has taken any rest. His thoughts, his time, are all concentrated on the great bronze statue of Jupiter, his days are spent in the workshop and the foundry directing his men, and his master eye and hand at work seem to be everywhere at once. Oh! if aught should go wrong after such toil of brain and body! If he were to give way to fatigue before the critical moment! I fear it, I fear it! No man, not even he, can do such miracles of endurance without the greatest risk!

*Enter PIETRO.*

BIANCA. What news of the Master, Pietro?

PIETRO. Almost worn out with constant anxiety and toil. Yet, in those brief times when he is absent from the foundry, he will ever be at other work—to keep himself awake, he says. I do not like it, and there are other things I do not like.

BIANCA. What things, Pietro?

PIETRO. When, not long ago, I was in the foundry examining the machinery and the ropes, I found one rope, the very one on which the greatest strain will fall, nearly worn through. It was not in its proper place. It had been caught on a sharp edge of steel.

BIANCA. By accident?

PIETRO. Ah! Mademoiselle, who can tell?  
Among so many there is always the chance  
of one traitor.

BIANCA. What reason for treachery could there  
be? Yet I, too, have my fears.

PIETRO. Let us hope for the best. The mischief  
I found is of course repaired, and in a few  
hours the metal should be set and all go well.

BIANCA. Even so my fears haunt me. And I  
mistrust especially one of the chief workmen.

PIETRO (*aside*). I too. (*Aloud.*) Mademoiselle,  
suspicions are often mistaken. I had better  
not ask you, therefore, who this man is.

*Enter ALEXANDRE.*

ALEXANDRE. I bring a message from the Master.  
He is greatly fatigued, and prays both Made-  
moiselle and you to come to him at once.

BIANCA. It is well. (*She looks significantly at  
PIETRO, who returns her glance.*)

PIETRO. Keep a good watch, Alexandre, in my  
absence. There is much depending on it.  
(*Exeunt BIANCA and PIETRO.*)

ALEXANDRE (*solus*). Indeed there is. Much more  
than you suppose! I have outwitted you all!  
The metal supply must fail, and I defy you to  
find the hidden metal. And now to give the

news to those who wait for it! (*As he moves to window, DIANE, dressed in black and veiled, enters unperceived by him at top of staircase up stage, and watches him.*) (*Signalling with handkerchief to dependancy.*) Yes, all is safe; the Duchess will be satisfied, and indeed I have earned both her money and her protection, which I must seek before the crash comes. Ah! Cellini, Corsicans do not forget! You killed my uncle! At one blow *I* kill your statue and your fame! (*Exit towards dependancy.*)

DIANE (*descending stairs, but remaining at back*).  
Who can this be? What did his signal mean?  
I could not catch his words, but I suspect mischief!

*Enter* CAPTAIN OF GUARD.

CAPTAIN. I have ventured to follow the Countess hither, to bring her at once the news that Signor di Gaddi is safe at the Louvre.

DIANE. Excellent! And you have come in good time to do me another service. A man has just gone from here towards the Nevers dependancy. Have him followed and arrested. Let him be searched and taken to the Louvre. It is a matter for haste.

CAPTAIN. It shall be done at once, madam. (*Exit.*)

*Enter BIANCA, PIETRO, and CELLINI. BIANCA and PIETRO half lead CELLINI to couch.*

CELLINI. That my strength should threaten to fail me just when I most need it! Pietro! how of the supply of metal?

PIETRO. I counted the pieces again this morning. All was well then.

CELLINI. Then let us hope all is yet well. Go, my good Pietro. *(Falls back on couch in reverie, and half-asleep.)*

PIETRO *(aside as he goes out)*. Would I could help such a master more than I can! May Heaven preserve him and grant his name may live! *(Exit.)* *(DIANE comes forward quietly. BIANCA starts. DIANE unveils and lays finger on lip.)*

DIANE. Do you not know me?

BIANCA. No! Are you the Duchess de Beauvais?

DIANE. Heaven forbid! I am Diane de Poitiers.

*(CELLINI starts at the name and looks up.)*

BIANCA. Diane de Poitiers!

CELLINI. Diane de Poitiers! Thank Heaven! *(Tries to rise, but is overcome by weakness. To BIANCA.)* Daughter, it seems what I dreaded will come to pass. My strength will fail me before the work is finished!

BIANCA. Dear guardian, what you need is sleep!

CELLINI. What time have I for sleep?

DIANE. Nay, Cellini, indeed you *must* sleep. You shall have good news to soothe you and to help you revive. Colombe is safe at my house, Antonio released and at the Louvre, waiting the King's orders, which will hardly detain him there.

CELLINI. I thank Heaven, and I thank you, Diane. I will try to sleep. But, first, I have something strange to show you. (*Producing letter from doublet.*) This is nothing less than a letter from—from—Duchess—read (*he is overcome by sleep*), take it. (*He holds it out and drops it as he falls back asleep. DIANE catches up letter, of which the outside sheet falls from her hand.*)

DIANE. What is this? It is from the Duchess—and to whom? Ah! I was right indeed, and the Duchess is nothing more nor less than a spy in the enemy's camp! Now, indeed, I have a weapon that cannot fail! I wonder what his Majesty will say to this!

CELLINI (*murmuring in his sleep*). The artist's ambition! What is it? Death may kill it and him at any moment! How short a life! Yet his works may live! The Jupiter may live!

DIANE. Even his dreams still full of that, Bianca! This letter is of the utmost import, such import that I must carry it at once to the

King! (*She goes to couch, and watches CELLINI for a moment.*) Sleep on, Cellini! Sleep on, and gain new strength to meet your foes and mine. God be with you and your work! (*Exit DIANE.*)

BIANCA. A kind heart if one ever beat! And a true friend if one ever lived! (*She lays her hand on CELLINI'S forehead.*) He is hot and fevered still. I will get some of the sovran essence of which he himself keeps the secret, to bathe his brow. (*Exit BIANCA.*)

*Enter DUCHESS dressed in black and veiled as was DIANE.*

DUCHESS. Alexandre gave the signal. All is well, yet my coming here with the pretext of inquiry concerning the necklace may serve to divert suspicion. (*Seeing CELLINI.*) Ha! He sleeps! How worn, how pale he looks! But how much paler and more haggard he will look soon—reft of all his power, all his greatness, and by my contrivance! Cellini, you who thought to measure swords with me, your day is over! You have no weapon left! (*Her eye falls on outside sheet of her own letter.*) Heavens! what is this? (*She takes it up.*) Part of my own letter! Then he must have the rest! He must know all! Who was it said lightly

that he knew too much for one man? It has become truth in deadly earnest. Deadly indeed, for he sleeps, and there is but one sure way! (*She draws dagger and has raised it, when enter BIANCA, who, perceiving the situation, rushes forward and catches the DUCHESS'S arm.*)

BIANCA. Diane! You! It is for this, then, you have waited. (*With her own dagger at DUCHESS'S heart.*) Let that dagger fall, or I kill you! (*DUCHESS drops dagger.*) Now, let me see the face of a traitress, that I may never again be deceived by witching smiles and honied words. (*Seeing DUCHESS'S face.*) Thank Heaven it is not Diane! I might have known she could not be so base! You must be, I think, that Duchess of whom I have so often heard—a phantom long dreaded, but now for the first time seen! You had best away at once, lest I call our people, who care for their master above all else, and who would value your duchessdom at nothing! Away, I say, lest I myself feel tempted to pierce your treacherous heart! (*The DUCHESS retires to door à reculons, followed closely by BIANCA, with menacing dagger. At door:.*)

DUCHESS. You may never see me again, but you will have reason to remember the day when you insulted the Duchess de Beauvais!

BIANCA. You mean the day when I weakly spared a murderess!

DUCHESS (*furious*). I warn you, beware of my vengeance! (*Exit.*)

BIANCA. Her warnings do not trouble me, but the knowledge of her murderous attempt and of my encounter with her might trouble Cellini. He is too overwrought already, dear guardian and master! (*Bends affectionately over CELLINI.*)

*Enter PIETRO, leaving portière open. A dull glow is seen through, which grows fainter gradually through ensuing Scene.*

PIETRO. Mademoiselle Bianca! the worst has happened! There is no fuel for the furnace!

BIANCA. No fuel?

PIETRO. Scarce any left! See how low it burns! You must rouse the Master at any cost! None but he can help at such a time.

BIANCA. Guardian! Master! Wake! Wake! The fuel is giving out! All will be ruined!

CELLINI (*rising awake with a bound*). All ruined! Not while Cellini breathes! What is this? Quick, Pietro!

PIETRO. The wood has been damped, the furnace burns low, Alexandre is missing!

CELLINI. He! there is some one whose hireling he is! Call in some of the men at once,

and let others stand by the furnace. What is needed, say you?

PIETRO. Wood, wood, master! (*He goes to back and comes back with men. Meanwhile:*)

CELLINI (*to* BIANCA). That hatchet on the shelf, quick, child, quick! (*She gives it to him, he chops up a splendid table at once, and throws the pieces to the men.*) There, to begin with! Pietro! throw the chairs in whole! That other table!

BIANCA. Your own design, guardian!

CELLINI. What matters? In with it! (*He attacks another table and demolishes it.*) Again, that inlaid chess-table! (*All this has been done with a swiftness and precision startling after his recent exhaustion. The men have caught his spirit, and the work has been executed with utmost speed.*) Pietro, take you the hatchet, go through the house, spare nothing that may serve.

WORKMAN (*to* PIETRO). There is enough wood, sir, but unless we get metal all is lost. (*The glow from furnace grows less faint. Cries from foundry, 'Metal! we want metal!'*)

CELLINI. What is this, Pietro?

PIETRO. Alas! Master! the metal has been stolen, cannot be found. And where, dear Master, can I find more metal at this hour?

CELLINI (*enraged*). The metal too! It is enough to madden one! (*Suddenly regaining his usual*

*command.*) Where—where shall you find metal? There, Pietro, there! (*Pointing to shelves and himself taking down a massive goblet and giving it to PIETRO.*) Quick! quick! Set all the hands you can to work. Come, men, take all you need to the last to feed the fiery hunger of the furnace, all save one. (*He has handed some down himself during this speech.*)

BIANCA. That glorious cup with the battle of Pavia?

CELLINI. No, no, let all go, I say all, save only this! (*He takes down crucifix and kisses it.*) And now, child! we have done all that men can do, and must await Heaven's will with all patience we can! (*They stand together down stage hand in hand. The glow grows brighter and brighter. A murmur rises from the foundry, growing by degrees to a roar of triumph. PIETRO rushes in, followed by workmen, who group round CELLINI.*)

PIETRO. The mould is full, Master, the mould is full!

CELLINI (*with intense relief*). Ah! (*He staggers for a moment, and then rising to his full height:*) God in His Heaven has judged our cause!

(*All uncover as Curtain falls on group of which CELLINI is the centre.*)

## ACT V

## SCENE I

*A room in the DUCHESS's house. DUCHESS discovered.  
She paces stage restlessly.*

DUCHESS. All lost! all lost! A countermine to every mine! I might have borne that from Cellini who was engineer before he was stonemason! But from Diane, from that woman, who will surely oust me from the King's favour! The King's favour!—the great matter now is to escape the King's anger while there is yet time. (*Strikes bell. Servant appears.*) Show the Count de Préville in the moment he arrives! (*Exit Servant.*) But I cannot bear to fly without loosing a Parthian dart at that girl who threatened me and overcame me! I will do it. Préville *can* help me there, and in my flight.

*Enter Servant, ushering in PRÉVILLE.*

DUCHESS. So, Préville, it wanted only what befell an hour ago to top the ruin! Alexandre, that

wretch, confessed all in the hope of saving his neck.

PRÉVILLE (*whose manner to her has become cold and reserved*). All? As to Cellini's statue!

DUCHESS. Pah! Cellini's statue! As if that mattered! What troubles me is the affair with Spain!

PRÉVILLE. An affair from which I attempted to dissuade you. I wonder that you involved yourself in it.

DUCHESS. So do I, now that it is too late.

PRÉVILLE. Too late, indeed!

DUCHESS. Instead of idly mocking me, how if you were to try to help me?

PRÉVILLE. My poor help is at your Highness's service so far as——

DUCHESS (*angrily*). So far as is consistent with your own safety! Do you think I have been associated with you so long without knowing you thoroughly, without knowing the craven heart that belies that implacable demeanour? Ah! Préville! you are brave enough, true enough, so long as Fortune smiles on you! But let Misfortune, that true test of truth and courage, lay her finger on you, you falter, you tremble, you would betray if you dared! With me you dare not!

PRÉVILLE (*aside*). Be not too sure of that

(*Aloud.*) Madam! you forget, I think, that you are dealing with a Prévile, not with a d'Orbec! I was about to say I will give you whatever help I can.

DUCHESS. Forgive my hasty words! Are you still Lord Provost of Paris?

PRÉVILLE. I am not yet deposed, and I shall remain here.

DUCHESS. That is brave, and again, forgive me! I scarce know what I say! You can give me, then, some men to see me across the frontier?

PRÉVILLE. I will! Though I increase my own risk vastly in so doing.

DUCHESS. My good Prévile! One other favour I would beg of you. I would fain leave a parting message with Signorina di Gaddi—a token of mutual forgiveness—perchance a bouquet might be happily emblematical?

PRÉVILLE. A bouquet? Yes. (*Aside.*) I thought it would come to that!

DUCHESS. All my people will be in my own train. Can you spare me a trusty man as a messenger?

PRÉVILLE. Assuredly.

DUCHESS. Then, good Prévile, will you send me such a one? I must bid you farewell now, there is so much to be arranged. So, Prévile, we part in all friendship. When all else seemed

to fail me you at least are true! Farewell!  
(*As she goes out, aside.*) And if he is not true  
to me I shall know somehow how to punish  
him, however far away I may be. (*Aloud.*)  
Again, farewell! (*Exit.*)

PRÉVILLE (*solus*). Ah! snake! You think you  
can trust me, whom you have fooled too often  
in too many ways. You shall think so till  
the last moment! You shall give your secret  
orders to a trusty and speedy messenger.  
Mine will be given to one yet speedier and  
trustier. And I shall rise again upon your  
ruin. (*Exit.*)

#### END OF SCENE I

#### SCENE II

*A fête (by night) in the KING'S gardens. Illuminations,  
etc. Distant view of river with lighted bridges. Guests,  
some in masks and dominoes, meet and exchange saluta-  
tions, as curtain rises. The KING comes down  
accompanied by DIANE, CELLINI, BIANCA.*

DIANE. Your Majesty thinks, then, that I did not  
overstep the mark in praying for so much  
authority?

THE KING. By the faith of a King, Diane, next time we fear treachery we should do well to abdicate in your favour till the miscreants are discovered and outwitted! What say you, Cellini?

CELLINI. In truth, Sire, I and mine owe so much to the same swiftness of perception and action that I could not if I would disagree with your Majesty.

THE KING. And you, too, Mistress Bianca, we should have you always near us to oppose assassins who would despatch us in our sleep. Ha, Cellini?

CELLINI. Indeed, Sire, I owe my life to Bianca as much as to the Countess. It was a brave deed to face and overcome such a woman so bent on destruction!

BIANCA. O, guardian! A brave deed for one who has been your pupil?

DIANE. It is well said, girl; is it not, Sire?

THE KING. Indeed it is. Well, the Duchess has fled, as you know, and found refuge with my *trusty and well-beloved* cousin the Emperor Charles the Fifth of Spain. Well, Prévile's knowledge of the city is almost too good to lose! We will see about our good Prévile! For the rest, we are well rid of them.

CELLINI. May I ask, Sire, what of Alexandre?

THE KING. That hound! He made full confession and completed the chain of proofs given by the diamond and the letter. And as to diamonds, Diane! Here is a toy for you. (*Gives her the necklace.*) Wear it, I pray you, as a token of gratitude from your Sovereign and your friend!

DIANE. Sire! No gratitude of mine can equal your bounty!

THE KING. Tut! tut! I want no gratitude. Let me only keep your friendship. And with that you can help me again. Tell me, how can I reward Cellini? No appointment—certainly not that which I have given him of Court Artist in ordinary—can come near what fame has done for him. What else can I give him?

DIANE. Your royal consent to the union of Colombe and Antonio.

THE KING. I had thought of that already—I must have caught some of your wisdom! (*To CELLINI, who during this dialogue, since 'Here is a toy for you,' has discreetly kept aside.*) Cellini! We would fain mark our remembrance of the perils that you and I have passed together. Yet what can Monarch give to Monarch? I believe I shall best please you by authorising the union of Colombe and Antonio!

CELLINI. Sire! a gift worthy of yourself!

THE KING. So! Then farewell for to-night!

Your happiness makes my joy! (*Exit.*)

CELLINI. After all storms a calm!

BIANCA. It is indeed a haven of rest.

DIANE. Who lives shall see! (*A man approaches her with a letter silently, and silently disappears.*)

DIANE (*reading letter*). Bianca! give me a moment's speech with Cellini. (*BIANCA moves a little apart, and DIANE gives letter to CELLINI.*)

CELLINI (*reading aloud*). 'Countess! A warning! Some one will approach Mademoiselle di Gaddi at the first opportunity, probably to-night at the fête, with a bouquet. It will be—poisoned. Its perfume once inhaled—death. Ask me not whence it comes, but remember in his favour this warning from your once friend Préville.' Ha! the Borgia custom! Bianca, hold still aloof a while. Stop! my mask and domino! (*BIANCA gives them to him and he assumes them. BIANCA goes a little up stage.*)  
Now, Diane!

DIANE. I see, I am ready!

*Enter one of PRÉVILLE'S men. He goes to DIANE, who has put on a mask.*

THE MAN. Mademoiselle di Gaddi?

DIANE. At your service.

THE MAN. I am charged to bring you this with all assurance of love and respect from one who was once your enemy and hopes thus to become your friend. (*He holds out the bouquet with his left hand.* CELLINI, *with the hilt of his sheathed poniard in his left hand, strikes him such a blow on the arm that he drops the bouquet in rage and fury, and draws his sword on CELLINI, who immediately disarms him.*)

CELLINI (*unmasking*). You did not know whom you attacked!

THE MAN. Good Heaven! Cellini!

CELLINI. Yes, Cellini, who, in the absence of the King, usurps authority to bid you fly. I know you are a foolish messenger and dreamt not what you brought. Man! it is poison. One breath of it closely inhaled was *death*! (*He tramples the bouquet.*) Fly! Fly! I tell you, at once! (*Exit the MAN.*)

CELLINI. Bianca! the danger is past!

BIANCA (*coming down*). There was danger, then! I knew it, and you have saved me again!

CELLINI. No, child! It is Diane who saved you!

DIANE (*tenderly*). Ah! Cellini! If it be so, I have saved her for you!

CELLINI. Is it possible, Bianca?

BIANCA. Are you not the Master?

CELLINI. Diane! How can I thank you? With Heaven's help you have given me a treasure beyond all price!

FINIS







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